

NSC BRIEFING

22 May 1957

POLISH PARTY PLENUM

- I. At Polish party plenum, held 15-19 May, Gomulka strengthened his position as Communist boss in Poland, although deep factional cleavages remain.
  - A. He added two supporters (old crony Kliszko and the liberal Jerzy Morawski) to Party secretariat.
  - B. His firm policy statement has probably won over many uncommitted officials.
- II. Ochab's removal from <sup>Party</sup> secretariat was probably not demotion.
  - A. He remains in politburo and spoke in favor of Gomulka's program at meeting.
  - B. As agriculture minister, he can devote greater effort to important agricultural reforms.
- III. Gomulka showed he intends to continue program he outlined last October, without permitting liberalization to get out of bounds.
  - A. He will continue to curb outspoken press--rejected liberal "revisionism" and Stalinist "dogmatism".
  - B. In strongest attack yet on liberals, final plenum resolution said "revisionism is main ideological danger in party."
  - C. On other hand, Gomulka firmly insisted on independence of the Kremlin and internal reforms.
    1. Plenum resolution warned against Stalinist attacks on Gomulka's policies, reaffirmed peasant freedom to farm privately and religious education in schools.

2. While denying the label "national communism" as an imperialist invention, Gomulka said the "Russian" road to socialism, even without "disease of cult of personality," is probably not acceptable and certainly not necessary for other countries.

IV. Plenum appears to have strengthened Gomulka's position vis-a-vis Moscow and its Polish supporters.

A. Soviet-oriented party leaders failed in open attempts to force policy changes, won no places on either Politburo or Secretariat

B. Kremlin, for the time being, appears to support Gomulka.

1. Soviet press and radio are giving full dissemination to his speech.

2. Magazine Kommunist, Soviet ideological bell-wether, will reprint full text.

3. Major Soviet-oriented party leader (Mazur) reportedly made sudden switch to Gomulka.

V. Gomulka's main strength is still his popular support, which will be little affected by plenum proceedings.

A. He can retain this support only by showing some gain in living standards.

B. So far, reasonably successful in countryside, less so in cities.

1. Popular discontent is already in ominous grumbling stage among industrial workers.

VI. Poles have lived up to their agreement not to publicize economic negotiations with the US.